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KILLED THE "LITTLE INNOCENT RESOLVE"

SENATE'S FIERCE ONSLAUGHT AGAINST RESOLUTION OF SENATOR ADAMS—DID NOT LIKE IT, BUT COULD NOT TELL WHY

Had it not been for Concurrent Resolution No. 4, by Senator Adams, the session of the Senate would have been one of dreary monotony yesterday.

The taking lup of that "innocent little resolution," as Senator Adams spoke of it, acted like the clang of the alarm gong to a sleepy fire company.

Senator Buckman grabbed a line of hose and began to throw a lively stream of cold water on the resolution, Senator Henderson picked up the chemical cart and hurled great chunks of extinguishers at the measure, Senators West and Crane toted the hook and ladder trucks and worked hard to pick out what they considered dangerous explosives, while Senator Humphries guided the police patrol, so that when a vote was taken, the fire was put out by 17 nays to 8 yeas, and nothing was damaged save the feelings of Senator Adams.

Here is the resolution that caused all the fuss. The intimation of the opposition was that a "joker" was concealed somewhere in the resolution, but nobody seemed able to point out its hiding place:

"Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 4, relating to State appropriations and tax levies. 'Whereas, the best interest of the taxpayers of the State demand that all appropriations made from the State Treasury shall be safeguarded, and whereas those who are burdened with taxes for the payment of appropriations made should be advised of the amounts and of the uses and purposes of such taxes and expenditures, and whereas, the method heretofore pursued of making general appropriations from the general revenue fund of the State government has not been in accordance with the system prevailing for many years in making appropriations for ordinary State expenses, and whereas, special tax levies and for the State Board of Health, and whereas, it is proper that the taxpayers and citizens of the State should be fully advised of the purposes for which all tax levies are made and of the expenditures from such levies, and whereas, large appropriations in bulk from the general revenue fund of the State are misleading to the taxpayers and render it difficult to estimate the proper tax levy that should be made by such fund, and whereas, the method used in designating in detail the number of officers, clerks and employees to be engaged in the several departments of the State government and the amount to be paid to each such persons, should be extended as far as practicable to all institutions of the State having appropriations from the State;

"Therefore, be it Resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring, That it is the sense of the Legislature of the State of Florida, that all appropriations made by the State for any purpose should state its purpose, and if for any institution, to state in detail the number of officers or other persons to be employed and the amount to be paid to each such person or other persons, as is done for all officers, clerks and employees in the different departments of the State Government; that necessary contingent and incidental expenses of such institutions be provided for by limited appropriations to be used only upon such vouchers; and that appropriations of any appreciable amount made for purposes other than the current expenses of the State Government shall be provided for by special tax levies, designating the particular purposes, and the amounts to be levied therefor."

Senator Buckman began his assault on the resolution, by saying that it was nonsensical that appropriations could be itemized so as to cover the amount needed for two years.

While evidently thinking of the institutions under the care of the Buckman law, but speaking of the Insane Asylum, he launched forth into a series of reasons why the resolution should not be adopted.

"What is the object of this resolution?" demanded Senator Buckman, who was satisfied that something was below the surface. Nobody seemed able to give the information he sought, though he asked for it several times, while Senator Adams assured the Senate that the sole intent of the resolution was to show in the appropriation just how much and for what purpose a tax levy would be made.

This explanation failed to please the opposition. Senator Buckman continued to denounce the resolution, asserting that some discretion should be permitted officials in the expenditure of an appropriation; that incidentals cannot be computed, and that appropriations for State institutions must be made approximately. He asked if money was not safeguarded when appropriation bills were considered in committee, by the Legislature and approved by the Governor? Any other plan would cast imputations upon the honesty of all.

Senator Adams replying, said that he could not understand the opposition to "this little, innocent resolution," and assured Senator Buckman that its adoption would not repeal the Buckman law.

"Appropriation should state its purpose," declared Sen-

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MACWILLIAMS' PLEA FOR PURE BALLOT

DENOUNCED PROVISION IN WATSON PRIMARY BILL PERMITTING "HELP" TO IGNORANT VOTERS

Consideration of the bill of Mr. Watson "to regulate the holding of primary elections," was the feature of the work of the House yesterday.

The bill was taken up by sections and discussed, and several amendments were proposed, but lost. At request of Mr. Watson, further consideration was suspended until today, when it comes up as unfinished business.

This was another occasion when Mr. MacWilliams of St. Johns got out in front, and eloquently he spoke for an amendment proposed by Mr. Reese of Escambia, eliminating the clause permitting the inspector to "vote for"



This shows Mr. Senator Beard in his great act of pouting the pouts. Note his strong resemblance to Achilles.

inating the clause permitting the inspector to "vote for" any elector who "cannot read sufficiently" to "vote, but his capable presentation of the evil that might occur under such provision had no effect on the House, as the amendment was lost.

Mr. MacWilliams said that this section provided for violation of the secrecy of the ballot, the very essence of political uprightness.

He declared that should such a law be in force the bars would be let down to the vicious and purchasable voter. That if this section were enacted the corporations could dictate the elections; that the opportunity for free expression by the people would be limited.

With this proviso in the primary law attempts to corrupt the voter would be successful and the purpose of honest elections would be endangered.

Mr. MacWilliams was thoroughly aroused as to the evil contained in this section of the bill, and never spoke better or more directly to the point than he did on this subject.

Mr. Knight of Citrus believed that "politics would be purified" by eliminating the poll tax feature, saying that "the indifferent class" would vote for the candidate who would pay the poll tax. The House could not see the point of this argument, and the amendment was lost.

Among the bills passed by the House yesterday and by unanimous vote, was that by Mr. Baggett of Escambia, "to fix a penalty and other liabilities upon any telegraph company owning or operating a telegraph line or lines wholly or partly in this State engaged in the transmission of messages for a consideration, for the negligent failure immediately to transmit and deliver to the addressee any message received by it or by any of its agents or employees for transmission and to fix a rule of evidence in actions to receive same."

Eighteen bills were introduced yesterday, among them being one on the liquor question by Mr. Faulkner of Taylor, who is the House leader against intoxicants, and who had already introduced two drastic bills against the booze traffic. This one relates to the sale of liquor without a license, Mr. Faulkner going against the blind tigers as well as those not bereft of eyesight.

Another bill by Mr. Faulkner that will change conditions in this State if it becomes law, is that "to devote taxes paid by whites and negroes, respectively, to white and negro schools."

Providing for a State Game Commission was the subject of a bill by Mr. Clarke of Jefferson, while Mr. Thompson of the same county had one relating "to receiving money on a promise to perform labor," by Mr. Russell of Putnam, concerning collection of taxes on timber lands.

A concurrent resolution by Mr. Watson of Dade for the encouragement of the oyster industry, by asking the United States Fish Commission to send a representative to Tallahassee, was adopted.

TRUSTEES DO NOT STAND FOR THIS

BILL TO SPEEDILY DETERMINE THEIR STATUS INTRODUCED BY FARRIS, IS NOT SANCTIONED BY TRUSTEES.

It is not with the sanction or approval of the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund, that the bill directing the Attorney General to bring an action in the Leon County Circuit Court to speedily settle the trust imposed upon the trustees and to provide for the dissolving of the trust, was introduced.

Catching a rumor that the bill introduced by Representative Farris, directing the Attorney General to commence suit in the Circuit Court of Leon County asking for an adjudication of the status of the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund, emanated from the Attorney General's office, I called on Mr. Ellis yesterday and asked him about it.

General Ellis said that the bill introduced by Mr. Farris appeared to be substantially the same as one he had drafted, and explaining further his connection with the bill, he said:

"At a meeting of the Trustees, held Saturday morning, I suggested that a speedy judicial decision on the trust created in 1855, was very desirable. The Trustees believe they are required to prosecute the work of drainage and reclamation. They hold that the grants made to railroads were subject to the obligation to drain, and that until this trust was fully discharged the Trustees must hold the lands for the purpose of carrying out the trust.

"We have been accused of wrong doing when we have acted on our interpretation of the trust imposed on us. We are convinced that we are right, but I, for one, am tired of being held up to public scorn by the newspapers of the State. So I proposed to the Trustees a plan to get the judgment of a court on our interpretation of the trust we are administering. If the court sustained us, well and good, we could go ahead as we are now doing, protected from charges made against us. If the court should decide against us, the trust could be dissolved and the Trustees relieved of unjust criticism that way.

"The other Trustees suggested that I put my suggestions into concrete form and bring them before them in the afternoon. I put them into the form of a bill, which differs not materially from the bill introduced by Mr. Farris.

"Not a man objected to the proposed plan, and I left the meeting convinced that they all approved of it.

"I afterwards met Mr. Farris, who asked me about my plan. I told him what it was, and, at his suggestion, we walked to the Capitol and went into my office, where he prepared a bill (I suppose the one he introduced) from the pencil draft I made at the suggestion of the Trustees, while I smoked a cigar."

General Ellis evidently misunderstood the Trustees, because the introduction of the bill came as a surprise to them, so much so that a meeting was held yesterday afternoon at which the Farris Trustee Interpretation and Dissolving Bill was discussed.

No decision was reached at this meeting as to the attitude of the Trustees towards this bill, and it is probable that another meeting will be held this morning.

I saw both the Governor and Mr. Croom last night and asked them their opinion of the bill.

The Governor said:

"In my judgment there's no need for this bill. There are suits already started which will determine the status of the Trustees, and this proposed action by the Attorney General cannot stop these suits nor prevent others being brought.

"Trustees have sued off and on for fifty years and no court has yet decided that the trust is not valid. No action brought in a State court can prevent non-residents bringing suits in the Federal courts."

Mr. Croom said:

"When General Ellis made his suggestion to the trustees last Saturday, I said that a matter of such importance should not be determined by us without the advice of our general counsel.

"I was much surprised to see the bill introduced, and wondered who had drafted it.

"At the meeting yesterday afternoon, at which Governor Jennings was present, I asked General Ellis if he had drawn the Farris bill. He said that it was prepared in his office from his pencil draft.

"I then declared my opposition to it, and none of the other Trustees except General Ellis expressed themselves in its favor.

"General Ellis said that he would not work for its passage, but if members sought his opinion, he would tell them that he was in favor of it.

"To this I replied that I would do all I could to beat it, because I thought it unnecessary and unwise."

Mr. Farris was asked to give his reasons for introducing the bill.

He said:

"I introduced the bill because I thought it would hasten a decision on the validity of the acts of the Trustees, as a judgment of a State court would be followed by the Federal courts in a matter in which the interest affected lay wholly within the State."

Mr. Farris was asked what he knew about the Internal Improvement Fund and its trustees.

He admitted that he knew very little about it or them; that he had never found the time to study the act creating the trust, nor the acts of the Trustees under it; that he believed in drainage as a proposition, but wanted to see the question of the rights of the Trustees settled.

In answer to a further question, Mr. Farris said that he introduced the bill because it looked like a good bill, but that he was open to conviction as to its want of merit.